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Chairman: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)
Acting Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Saha

Contents

Agenda item 132: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 132: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Implementation of the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the management audit of the regional commissions (A/60/378)

1. **Mr. Rahman** (Acting Chief of the Regional Commissions New York Office), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the management audit of the regional commissions (A/60/378), said that the report showed that most of the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) had already been acted upon or would be implemented by 2006. The meetings of the chiefs of programme planning of the regional commissions, the most recent of which had been held in September 2005, continued to act as a forum for the exchange of good practices and experiences. The September meeting had decided that the follow-up to the recommendations of oversight bodies, including OIOS, should be a standing item on its agenda in order to develop a common approach and ensure harmonized reporting. Two task forces had been established: one headed by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) on recommendation 5 of OIOS and the other headed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) on recommendation 9.

2. With regard to recommendation 7, the experience of ESCAP in implementing a results-based approach to regional advisory services had been noted as good practice, and the new guidelines on the management of the regional advisory services prepared by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) clearly emphasized the results-based approach, while the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was updating its own operational guidelines. The commissions were also actively enhancing the linkages between their operational activities and their normative and analytical work.

3. In the case of recommendation 6, most of the commissions had assigned focal points for fund-raising, and there were management committees to advise on projects submitted for extrabudgetary funding. The question of fund-raising would be given active consideration by the executive secretaries of the regional commissions at their forthcoming meeting.

4. Many of the recommendations of OIOS fell within the purview of the executive secretaries, who were fully committed to their implementation. The assessment of the intergovernmental machinery (recommendation 3) was being conducted in consultation with the commissions. The findings of the recent review of the intergovernmental structures of the commissions would be included in the report on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council in 2006 by the Regional Commissions New York Office.

5. **Ms. Galvez** (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and, in addition, Iceland, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine said that the report confirmed the impression that the recommendations of OIOS were to the point and of use to the regional commissions. It was a good thing that some of the recommendations, in particular recommendation 1, which was aimed at more succinct reporting, had already been implemented.

6. However, the response to the other recommendations was that the commissions had discussed and shared best practices. There was little information about concrete steps to address the issues requiring attention or any assessment of the potential impact of implementation of the recommendations on programme delivery. Recommendation 3, on reassessment of the intergovernmental machinery to streamline processes and avoid duplication, for example, was very important but in certain cases it appeared not to have received adequate consideration. On the question of evaluation (recommendation 5), an issue of great importance to the Committee, the report provided no new significant information; a more substantive answer had been expected.

7. **Ms. Kuroda** (Japan) said that the status of the implementation of the recommendations of OIOS varied from commission to commission, but it was encouraging that all of them would be implemented by 2006. However, the report did not provide enough

information to give Member States an overall picture of the functioning and management of the commissions.

8. She noted with satisfaction that all of the commissions had established focal points for fund-raising, but wondered whether those focal points were fully operational. She would also welcome information on the outcome of the meeting of the programme planning of regional commissions, which had been hosted by ESCWA in September 2005. The quality of publications (recommendation 9) must be maintained and duplication of content avoided. Given the wide differences in the publication mechanisms of the commissions, she wondered whether any attempt been made to share information on that subject.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.